

Maunsel White to Andrew Jackson, March 3, 1838, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

MAUNSEL WHITE TO JACKSON.

Private.

New Orleans, March 3, 1838.

. . . . I trust you will give me Credit when I tell you how grateful I feel, for your Kindness and confidence in sending my House your Cotton, under the Circumstances mentioned in your Letter. I know I have many Opponents in Business, who are not delicate in endeavoring to get out of my hands, not only your Business alone, but maney others which they are entirely welcome to whenever, by any improper act of mine or the House, I forfeit the Friendships of any Friends and altho we have suffered by many of those to whom we have made heavy advances by its being withheld from us, Yet so far, we have not called upon any of the monied institutions for relief, but stand firm on our Own means.¹

¹ In the Jackson MSS. are many returns of the sales of Jackson's cotton by his agents in New Orleans, but they are not complete enough to show the size of his crops. We know however that 74 bales were raised at the Hermitage in 1837, the only year for which the figures are apparently complete (Jackson to A. J. Hutchings Mar. 15, 1838). Speaking of this crop Jackson said, "We will soon have to quit making cotton here". A better estimate can be made of the prices: In 1837 they were from 10 to 11 ½ cents in New Orleans, in 1839 they were from 8 to 9 cents (Maunsel White and Co. to Jackson Feb. 26, 1841), and in 1840 they were about the same (*ibid.*). The crop of 1841 brought 8½ cents (White to Jackson Jan. 14, 1842), that of 1842 sold at from 5½ to 6½ cents a

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pound, and the crop of the two plantations was 188 bales (J. B. Plauché to Jackson Jan. 23, 24, and May 24, 1843). The crop of 1843 brought about 6½ cents a pound (Plauché to Jackson Apr. 29, 1844). The crop of 1844, graded as “ordinary” in New Orleans, sold at 4½ cents (White to Jackson Mar. 12, 1845). From the returns we may learn the expenses of marketing. Freight from Nashville was \$3 a bale, and from Halcyon plantation, in Coahoma Co., Miss., it was \$1. Drayage in 1840 was 35 cents and in 1842 10 cents a bale. Fire and river insurance from Nashville was 60 cents a bale. Weighing was 10 cents a bale. Commissions were 2½ per cent. (White to Jackson Nov. 21, 1840, and Plauché to Jackson Jan. 24, 1843).

In 1832 an item that ran through the press showed that the quality of the Hermitage cotton at that time was very good. Referring to 54 bales sold at 11½ cents in New Orleans, the price currents of that city said it was an “extraordinary price” and added that it was the best cotton that had come to New Orleans from Tennessee (*Niles' Register*, XLII. 83). The quality of the cotton frequently depended on the overseer.

Your Crop is not yet sold, I am holding it at 11 ½ and I do hope to obtain 11c if I cant get 11 ½. I think it probable that so soon as the excitement created by the Bank Bill subsides I shall sell it. The Cotton marked L.Y. was much mixed. I examined it myself and the result of that examination was given you by the House in their Letter with the Groceries. Checks and Exchange on the East have risen, to 5 and 6 pCent premium, in consequence of heavy purchases made by the Agents of the Banks from Ohio and Kentucky, who are preparing for specie payments, but so soon as those Gentlemen are out of the market I think Eastern funds will again decline. Nashville paper is also in better demand, and Mr. Price of the House of Johnson Raiborne and Co. of Nashville tells me that it is selling at 5 or 6 pCt Discount. Your Instructions relative to the remittances shall be strictly attended to with entire regard to your Interest.

Messrs. Johnson Raibourne and Co. at Nashville hold about \$4000. of my Funds due on 1st april, on acc't Sugar they sold for me, which you may use or any part thereof you may

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want, until your own Money can be sent to you. For fear of Accidents we have had your groceries by the *Ellen Kirkman* insured.

By the present Conveyance the steamer *Danl. Webster* I have the pleasure to ship you the Juice Sugar and Keg Syrop and inclosed you will find Bill Lading, the captain promised to have the Juice standing on its end. and when you get it, have it placed on the lower head, that is the head that has the holes in, for whatever molasses may remain in it to drain out, and after it has stood two or three Weeks take out the upper head, and use it from the Top, thus the grain will be good. I have now only to remark that our market remains inactive, altho I dont notice any decline in cotton, being from 7 ½ or 9 for fair while good to fine brings from 9 ½ or 10 ½, and 11c. Wishing you and yours Health and prosperity

I remain y'r Sincere Friend and devoted Servt.